

## In-depth Participant Interview Guide for the SUPPORT Act Grants Evaluation

This document contains the interview guide for in-depth interviews with participants taking part in SUPPORT Act grant programs. These interviews will capture participants' background and interest in their program, their experiences taking part in program activities, and their views on the program. These interviews will be approximately 60 minutes in length and will be conducted with up to five participants per sub-grantee visit. Participants will fill out the information form at the end of this protocol to provide anonymous background information which will be used to describe the interview sample.

**Introductory statement for participants:** Thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. The reason we wanted to talk with you is because you are receiving or received services at [name of sub-grantee] funded by a SUPPORT Act grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. My name is [name] and I am part of a team conducting an evaluation of those grants for the U.S. Department of Labor. I'm here today to learn about your experience with that program. I am also interested in learning about some of the things that might make it harder or easier for you to participate in this program or to find employment. This information will help us determine what works in these programs and what could be improved, so your input is valuable to us. This discussion will take about 60 minutes, and at the end of it we will give you a \$20 gift card as a thank you.

**Privacy statement:** Information collected will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. The information you share with me today will be summarized and put together with information that we will gather from other clients with whom we talk. Nothing you say will ever be publicly linked to your name. I would like to record our conversation today, so I do not have to take many notes and can give you my full attention. If you would like to say anything off the record, just let me know and I will stop the recorder. Nothing you say will be shared with program staff and will not affect services or benefits from this or other programs. Your participation in the interview is voluntary, and there are no consequences if decline to participate. If you decide to participate in the interview, you can skip any questions that you don't want to answer. You can also end the interview at any point. *Interviewer will ask for verbal consent to participate in the interview and for permission to record the interview.*

**The Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This collection of information is voluntary and will be used to understand programs that integrate employment and substance use disorder services. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 60 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number and expiration date for this collection are OMB #: XXXX-XXXX, Exp: XX/XX/XXXX. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Hannah Betesh (Abt Associates); Hannah\_betesh@abtassoc.com

**Participant background**

- Employment history
  - o Work history prior to participation in program, including type of work, wages, and duration of employment
  - o Challenges faced in finding and retaining employment, including substance use disorder, mental health, COVID-19 pandemic, criminal history, and other factors
- SUD/ODD experience
  - o [For Type I participants]: SUD treatment and recovery journey (for individuals in recovery and individuals with friends/family affected by SUD), including age at onset of substance use and services received prior to program enrollment (for individuals in recovery)
  - o [For Type II participants]: Perspective on opioid crisis and substance use in the area more broadly.
- Living situation (whether participant is living on own, with friends/family, in transitional or sober housing) and extent to which their housing situations supports their employment/training, and recovery goals

**I. Interest in and goals for participating in the program**

- How/where learned about the program
- Reasons for enrolling in program
- Goals aiming to achieve through program, including employment, training, and treatment/recovery goals

**II. Enrollment process**

- Experience with intake, eligibility determination, and enrollment processes
- Experience working with staff to develop service plan (including integration with treatment services for Type I participants)

**III. Participation and experience in treatment and recovery services—*Type I participants only***

- Participation and service receipt
  - o Types of treatment and recovery services accessed through the grant (MOUD, residential/outpatient treatment, group/individual therapy, peer recovery support, etc.)
  - o How long they attended and how frequently
  - o Perception of quality of the services/extent to which it met their needs and expectations
- Barriers to and facilitators of participation in treatment and recovery services
  - o Extent of support from family and friends
  - o Hours and location of services (and how these relate to work and childcare obligations)
  - o Perceived quality of treatment and recovery services and staff
- Balancing treatment services and employment and/or training
  - o Whether and how program facilitates this
  - o (If applicable): consideration of MOUD dosing and therapeutic schedule needs
  - o Support for finding suitable employment

**IV. Participation and experience in employment and training services**

- Services to prepare for work or identify employment opportunities (career services)
- Services to help find employment (employment services)
- Training for employment opportunities (training services)

- [For individuals who are in or have completed Peer Recovery Specialist training] Reflections on Peer Recovery Specialist training:
  - Understanding of career path in the field
  - Reasons for pursuing Peer Recovery Specialist training
  - Experience with practicum placement (including receptivity of clinical staff to working with peers)
- Services to help with transportation, clothing, childcare, housing, and other needs to support working (supportive services)
- Post-employment services
- Reflections on services received
  - How services were sequenced with their training/recovery services and whether/how this fit their needs and expectations
  - Perception of quality of the service/extent to which it met their needs and expectations
  - Accessibility of services (flexible scheduling, virtual/in person options, etc.)
  - Factors that can make it hard for them to take part or that are needed for them to fully participate (e.g. child care, transportation)
  - Services not offered that participant would have wanted

#### V. Employment status

- If working:
  - Description of current occupation and job duties
  - Current wages/hours
  - Process of finding job, including assistance received from program
  - Challenges faced at work
  - Support from program in navigating challenges
  - Additional supports that would help with job success
  - Perception of quality of job
  - Alignment of current job with career goals, treatment goals
  - Future career plans – plans to stay at job or find another job
- If not working:
  - Why they are not working
  - Status of job search (whether searching; why/why not)
  - Career goals

#### VI. Perspectives on program services

- Services received that were most helpful from [insert name of sub-grantee, or other descriptor]
- Extent to which services prepared them for employment, including building job search and occupational skills and finding and obtaining employment
- Extent to which services supported their ability to retain employment (e.g., supportive and employment services)
- Challenges/areas for improvement
- Challenges to finding and maintaining employment while in recovery
  - Perspectives on how employment services and employment align with their goals for recovery
  - Perspective on how to balance recovery needs and employment goals
- Effect of services on personal goals for employment and treatment

- Effect of program on community [ask those seeking to transition to jobs providing SUD services, or those with friends/family with SUD]